(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years; year-wise;

(c) whether any improvement has been •noticed in controlling the animal diseases in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central funds released to the State of Maharashtra for the control of animal diseases during the last three years is as follows:

Year	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1995-96	59.31
1996-97	54.74
1997-98	86.46

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. Rinderpest disease, which had last occurred in the State in October, 1993 has been totally eradicated. There has been perceptible improvement in the disease status in terms of number of outbreaks/number of animals dead etc. with regard to economically important diseases like Haemorrhagic Septicaemia, Antorax, Black Quarter, Blue Tongue etc. The infrastructural facilities in the State for animal disease control have also been strengthened considerably.

Promotion of Agro-Forestry

4004. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to promote agro-forestry and orchard units in the country, particularly in Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) No specific and exclusive programme is being implemented for the promotion of agro-forestry in the country and particularly in the State of Assam. However, agro-forestry is one of the biological measure being advocated for the development of wastelands depending upon the location of the watersheds. The Indian Council of Aricultural Research is implementing an All India Coordinated Research Project on Agro-forestry in the country. For Assam, this is being implemented through the Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat. The Government is implementing a Central Sector Scheme on Development of Tropical, Temperate and Arid Zone Fruits under which assistance is being provided for increasing the production and productivity of various fruit crops through measures such as supply of quality planting material, rejuvenation of senile orchards, training of farmers besides area expansion. The scheme is being implemented in all the States of the country including Assam.

Decline in Kharif Production

4005. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kharif crop production has come down to 103.5 million tonnes against the targeted 105.5 million tonnes;

(b) whether it is also a fact that one of the reasons for the decline in the Kharif crop production was on account of low Kharif crop coverage this year which came down by 4.1 per cent; and

(c) what are the strategies being considered to enhance the rabi crop production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The production of Kharif foodgrains for 1997-98 is estimated at 103.7 million tonnes against the target of 105.5 million tonnses.

(b) Decline in Kharif crop production during 1997-98 is largely attributed to lower Kharif crop acreage by 1.6% as compared to 1996-97.

(c) The strategies adopted for increasing the
Rabi crop production include the emphasis for timely planting/seeding, increasing the area coverage under high yielding varieties/hybrids,
balanced use of fertilisers, ensuring irrigation

at the critical stages of crop growth, effective control of weeds, insects/pests and diseases etc. Besides, adoption of soil & water conservation measures, sequence cropping and inter are propogated.

For increasing the production of foodgrains, Centrally Sponsored Programmes viz, Integrated Cereals Development Programmes in Rice/Wheat/Coarsc Cereals Based cropping Systems arens and National Pulses Development Projects are being implemented.

Lowering of foodgrains production target

4006. SHRIMATI CHANDRAKALA PANDEY: SHRI RAJNATH SINGH "SURYA":

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Govemment have set a lower food production target for the year 1998-99 than the target set by the Planning Commission for this period;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the major grains/crops that would contribute significantly in the shortfall: and

(d) the impact of reduction in the target on per capita availability of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (d) The target for foodgrains production for the year 1998-99 is under finalisation in consultation with Planning Commission.

Wheat Production

4007. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMAN-
BHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be
pleased to state:

(a) what was the production of wheat in the
last season and how much it was less that the preceding season and the reasons therefor;

(b) how government have planned to overcome the deficit;

(c) whether Government propose to encourage our farmers to produce more wheat; and

(d) if so, what are the incentives announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The production of wheat is likely to be 66.38 million tonnes in 1997-98 as compared to 69.27 million tonnes in 1996-97, thus showing a fall of 2.89 million tonnes. The fall in production of wheat may be attributed to the unseasonal rains and prolonged cloud cover during the months of November and December, 1997 causing delayed sowing of wheat in some areas. It had also led to resowing of wheat in certain other areas resulting in low productivity.

(b) The government has decided to import 1.50 million tonnes of wheat during 1998-99.

(c) and (d) For increasing the production and productivity of wheat in the country, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme viz. Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Wheat Based Cropping Systems/Areas is being implemented. Through this Scheme, incentives are being provided to the fanners on the use of high yielding varieties of seeds, improved farm implements and sprinkler irrigation sets, so as to motivate them to adopt improved crop production technologies. Besides, for the transfer of improved crop production technologies, field demonstrations and fanners' training are also being organised under the Scheme.

Besides to popularise the recently released notified wheat varieties, the Seed Minikit Programme of Wheat including propagation of new technology is also being implemented in the country.

The minimum support price of wheat has been increased over the years to induce the farmers to produce more wheat.

उन्नत किस्म के दुधारू पशुओं का विकास

4008. **श्री बलवंत सिंह रामूवालिया**: क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि नैशनल डेयरी रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट द्वारा दुधारू पशुओं की दो उन्नत किस्मों का विकास किया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इन उन्नत किस्मों के नाम क्या-क्या हैं और उनकी दूध देने की क्षमता कितनी है;